

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

When Handling **BELL PEPPERS**

HANDLE WITH CARE

Bell Peppers are fragile, and heavy losses occur annually during marketing. The market value of peppers, especially those out of season, warrants better care. Extensive losses are caused by mechanical injury, chilling injury, and decay. The injuries are often followed by soft rots, alternaria rot, and grey mold rot, which increase losses.

Mechanical Injury Leads To Soft Rots



1. Rough and sandy field boxes cause skin breaks.
2. Nonrigid shipping containers often fail to protect peppers.
3. Overfilled containers cause bruising and crushing of pods.
4. Rough handling at all stages of marketing causes serious damage.

Chilling Injury Leads To Alternaria Rot

1. Chilling injury occurs if peppers are held at temperatures below 45° F. The lower the temperature the greater the injury.
2. Symptoms of chilling can occur in a few days if peppers are top iced or held near 32° F.



Follow These Rules

1. Handle peppers carefully.
2. Use packing containers that give maximum protection.
3. Do not overfill shipping containers.
4. Prevent serious skin and wall breaks in pods.
5. Keep transit temperatures at 45° to 50° F.
6. Do not top ice.
7. If brief storage is necessary, hold peppers at 45° to 50° F.
8. See USDA's Agricultural Handbook 195, and Marketing Research Report 536.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Agricultural Marketing Service

Market Quality Research Division

October 1962